

Behind the Numbers: American Red Cross Housing Solutions in Haiti

June 2015

The January 2010 earthquake dealt an immense blow to Haiti's infrastructure, and an estimated 2.3 million people – approximately one quarter of the national population – were displaced, with 1.5 million forced to seek shelter in makeshift camps. The earthquake's impact on Haiti's social, political, economic and infrastructure base has complicated the rebuilding process.

Families who live in secure housing are safer, healthier, and more resilient to future disasters. That's why the American Red Cross helps people who were displaced by the earthquake to leave camps and pursue more permanent shelter solutions, while also providing options to accommodate the spectrum of interests and needs of the wider community. These options include retrofitting houses, repairing infrastructure such as schools, improving sanitation facilities and expanding local economic opportunities to engage community members in reconstruction efforts directly through training and work programs and to invest their own resources in their new homes and communities.

The American Red Cross has spent or committed to spend \$173 million – or 35 percent of the total amount of received donations – on shelter in Haiti. These funds have helped 132,000 people obtain safe and improved housing during the recovery process, on top of the more than 860,000 people we provided with emergency shelter immediately after the earthquake. Our work continues today in helping to rebuild homes and neighborhoods.

When land upon which to build new homes was not readily available in places accessible to other services and livelihoods, given the huge numbers of people in camps, the Red Cross prioritized helping the most people possible to move out of camps to a safe home– even if it was a t-shelter – rather than putting all our eggs in one basket, only focused on building new houses for a much smaller number of people.

Working with partners like UNOPS, Habitat for Humanity and Handicap International, we built thousands of transitional shelters that can last 5 years or more. Rental subsidies helped thousands of Haitians leave camps and move into rented homes. We also helped and are still working with people to repair and strengthen their homes and in some cases, add space to allow someone from a camp to live in it rent-free for one year. We are continuing to repair schools, roadways, and water distribution points in neighborhoods.

The American Red Cross has fulfilled our promise to make sure tens of thousands of Haitians are back in homes. Construction remains in progress today in housing and community construction.

Fast Facts

- Haiti was the poorest country in the western hemisphere even before the earthquake.
- **\$13.5 billion** in international aid was pledged for Haiti after the earthquake.
- The American Red Cross received \$488 million in donations— less than **4 percent** of total of all aid committed to Haiti.
- The American Red Cross has spent or committed to spend **\$173 million** – or 35 percent of the total amount of received donations – on shelter in Haiti.
- The American Red Cross has helped **132,000 people** obtain safe and improved housing.
- Immediately after the earthquake, the American Red Cross provided emergency shelter for more than **860,000 people**.

Detailed breakdown of how the American Red Cross spent or committed \$173 million on shelter in Haiti, and how many households and people were helped:

Shelter Category	Cost¹	Households	People Reached²
Emergency Shelter <i>Includes tarps and tents in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake; short-term solution.</i>	\$34,450,794		More than 860,000 people ³
Repair/Reinforcement, Retrofit, Relocation, Rental Subsidies & Construction <i>Includes the repair/reinforcement of 4,110 damaged houses; a pilot project with 6 new houses; and the rent, retrofit for rental, and relocation subsidies for 6,727 households.</i>	\$34,319,064	10,843	54,215
Transitional Shelters (T-shelters) <i>These homes are considered transitional for two reasons. 1) Land tenure clearance may not be resolved and therefore they were built with the potential to be dismantled and reassembled at another location if permanent land became available. 2) The structures could be easily expanded to create a permanent construction.</i>	\$36,738,000	6,170	30,850
Upgraded Progressive Shelters <i>A progressive shelter is a type of shelter that has been designed from its conception to be upgraded with durable materials. This means that the foundations and structure of the house have already taken into account the future upgrades and are calculated to bear higher loads and the potential expansion.</i>	\$5,360,646	5,026	25,130
Neighborhood renovation/development <i>Includes rehabilitating neighborhoods by removing rubble, improving access to water, sanitation and electricity, demolishing unsafe homes identified by the Government of Haiti, repairing and retrofitting homes, upgrading and rehabilitating schools, constructing roads, pathways, retention walls, a bridge, and other shared community assets; also providing training to more than 21,000 people ensuring safer home construction.</i>	\$62,351,360		21,794
Totals	\$173,219,864	22,039	131,989

¹ Includes 9 percent for Management, General and Fundraising, and program support costs.

² The American Red Cross uses a multiplier of five people to estimate the average size of a typical Haitian household which is considered a conservative multiplier.

³ This figure is not included in the total 132,000 shelter beneficiary count nor is it included in the total beneficiary count for all ARC programs in Haiti in order to avoid double-counting as these individuals received other ARC services as well.